

SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.

- (1) *Modern Substitutes for Traditional Christianity.* By Edmund McClure. Pp. viii + 145. (London: S.P.C.K., 1913.) Price 2s. net.
- (2) *Modern Rationalism as Seen at Work in its Biographies.* By Canon Henry Lewis. Pp. x + 418. (London: S.P.C.K., 1913.) Price 4s. net.
- (3) *All Men are Ghosts.* By L. P. Jacks. Pp. ix + 360. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1913.) Price 5s. net.
- (4) *The Latest Light on Bible Lands.* By P. S. P. Handcock. Pp. xii + 371. (London: S.P.C.K., 1913.) Price 6s. net.
- (5) *The Divine Mystery.* By Allen Upward. Pp. xv + 309. (Letchworth: Garden City Press, Ltd., 1913.) Price 10s. 6d. net.

THE realities of spiritualistic belief are, so far, psychological, subjective. The pathetic paradox about its "apologetics" (science though this styles itself) is that it claims for its realities not only an objective, but a physical, existence. The apologist who condemns "mechanistic" and "materialistic" conceptions of the universe in the same breath introduces a series of super-mechanism and super-matter. Science can do nothing with spiritual entities until they are proved to exist objectively; when this is proved, then they become part of the subject-matter of science, and, therefore, part of the "stuff" of the universe. Matter and mechanism are good terms, but the spiritualist rages at them. The world-substance must be designated by some convenient term; one may serve as well as another; but it is absurd to object to a term because its popular significance suggests solidity and excludes mind.

It is a curious fact that the religion of Western Europe, which from its birth has had an uninterrupted career of success, should have been, from the first, "apologetic." Christianity certainly marked a development of the social consciousness; but it seems as if this apologetic attitude represented a certain mistrust of the spiritualistic material which this last of the old-world religions, and the first and only of the new world, carries with it, apparently as an essential content. The religious impulse is a fact of the emotional life, and with the majority of men requires expression. But Buddhism and Confucianism prove that the religious impulse may be satisfied with a subject-matter that is not supernatural or spiritualistic. If this is so, and if the Christian consciousness is at all mistrustful of traditional supernaturalism, then there is inevitably an air of insincerity about apologetics.

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(1) Canon McClure, in an interesting sketch of some modern variations of the supernaturalist point of view, uses the language of science. Miracles, for instance, are "like the mutations or the 'sports' of modern Darwinism." This is good metaphor, but "metaphors are not reasons." He quotes an instance of a frequent temptation to use new scientific discoveries, which have changed our views of matter, as an argument for the objective reality of the supernatural:—

"The very active 'things' which give the atom being are called electrons, and the point of interest to religiously minded people is this, that we have, in these electrons, according to an investigator of world-wide reputation, the nearest analogy to the concept of a disembodied spirit, that is, a charge of electricity pure and simple."

This seems childish; at least, it has no bearing on the argument, and does not help us "to recognise more fully than before that nature and revelation are not in antagonism." The neo-vitalism of Bergson is metaphysical, not scientific. It is regarded by Canon McClure, together with James's similar speculations, as a strong buttress to traditional Christianity. The old religion is better and saner than the modern "substitutes"; why, then, should apologists waste time in trying to prove the material reality of the subject-matter of its creed? The permanence of the religious impulse is not, as this author thinks, a proof of the "validity" (*i.e.* material reality) of supernatural entities; it is a proof of the validity of the religious impulse. This, surely, is enough. The mysticism of Eucken, and the superman of Nietzsche, "theosophy" and "Christian science," "secularism" and "rationalism," are well described and "refuted." It is curious that they should need refutation by a Christian apologist.

(2) Canon Lewis treats of the life and death of famous "rationalists" or "agnostics" by way of showing that the religious temperament produces finer characters than does the agnostic. Voltaire, Paine, J. S. Mill, Renan, Bradlaugh, Spencer, Nietzsche, Goethe, Schopenhauer, George Sand, Shelley, Huxley, George Eliot, Sidgwick, Romanes, and others are described, with emphasis on their moments of dissatisfaction and despair, and with full details of the meannesses of which one or two were guilty. Canon Lewis seems to think that disbelief in the objective reality of certain tenets of Christianity proves a lack of "heart and soul." It proves nothing of the kind; but merely that the person has thought for himself, instead of taking his thinking at second-hand.

(3) "Supernaturalism" has a permanent interest for the imagination. The "ghost story" is as

popular to-day as it was with primitive man. The author of "Mad Shepherds" is an artist. Possibly he is a "believer" (the term always implies materialistic belief) in spirits. His stories of "Panhandle and the Ghosts," "All Men are Ghosts," and "Farmer Jeremy," are fine art, showing an obsession by, and yet a scientific control of, the ghost idea.

"May it not be that Primitive Religion is the only religion that has ever existed, or will exist, in the world?"

'Panhandle,' I cried, 'you are a ghost!'

'Hush!' he answered, 'we never use that term in addressing one another. . . .'

"The Magic Formula" is an entirely charming story of child psychology.

(4) Certain exigencies of commission make Mr. Hancock's readable account of archæological discovery in Palestine, Babylonia, Assyria, Egypt, and Syria into a popular illustration of the Hebrew tradition. Thus we find such statements as "the life of Gilgamesh, the hero of Babylonian folklore, whose history presents parallels to many ideas expressed or implied in the Old Testament."

"Khammurabi, probably the Amraphel of the Book of Genesis"; "the cause of Israel's migration to Egypt." It has still to be proved that Israel ever was in Egypt; that Khammurabi, and many other historical persons, are really mentioned in the Hebrew books; and that the cosmogony of *Genesis* is anything more than a digest of the Babylonian. The book is an excellent introduction to Mesopotamian and Egyptian archæology, though its particular bias may lead the novice to a wrong perspective. The author is fair enough; the monuments, he admits, "do not do more than mention a few isolated facts out of all that are recorded in the Bible." With the exception of the statement of Menephthah that "Israel is desolated," the first event in the history of Israel or its ancestors certainly attested by the inscriptions is "the invasion of Judah by Shishak under Rehoboam, and the first Israelites whom they mention by name are Omri and Ahab."

(5) Mr. Allen Upward has insight, and has written a suggestive book on the development of religion. The main idea—the Divine Man or Genius—and the stages of his career from medicine man to Messiah, are adaptations from "The Golden Bough"; but the author has had personal experience of savage thought and custom in Nigeria. He has also a sound knowledge of modern thought in general and of the "higher criticism" in particular, and his work, though eccentric in parts (lexicographers will dispute some derivations), has value as an attempt to trace the genesis of Christianity. The central theme, the

idealisation of man and the practical work of prophet, priest, and king, is an interesting interpretation of history. But that it has been a predominant factor in the development of culture remains to be proved.

A. E. CRAWLEY.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

A Manual of Petrology. By F. P. Mennell. Pp. iv + 256. (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1913.) Price 7s. 6d. net.

THE writing of a clear and concise introduction to the study of petrology is fraught with extreme difficulty owing to the fact that the phenomena exhibited by rocks and rock-minerals are seldom capable of simple explanation, and thus the author is often led to assume a wider knowledge of cognate subjects on the part of the elementary student than is likely to be possessed. This book is framed upon a previous work by the same author, entitled, "An Introduction to Petrology"; in fact, a large portion may be regarded as a reprint. The author, however, has rejected much that was in the older publication, and has added new, well-selected matter, but the discussion of the phenomena presented by mineral sections when viewed in polarised light still leaves much to be desired.

Chapters i. to iii. are elementary in character, and deal with the general properties of minerals; the introduction of several tables, such as those dealing with specific gravity, colour, and refractive index, will be helpful to the student.

In chapters iv. to vii. the general characters of the rock-forming minerals are given, and often some simple means of differentiating any one from others which it resembles superficially. The number of species described, however, is slightly larger than is needed in a work of this kind.

The greater portion of the book deals with the classification of igneous rocks and their nomenclature, but mainly with the description of rock-types. The nomenclature has been reduced to its simplest form, and tedious description of unimportant variations have been avoided. The igneous rocks are followed by a brief account of sedimentary and metamorphic rocks.

The book is illustrated with 124 text-figures. Many of the illustrations are excellent, but a few of the figures, such as 66, 77, 86, 119, and 123, might be discarded without prejudice. The book may be described as well planned and methodically carried out; and it gives a good idea of the general nature and scope of the science.

Logging: the Principles and General Methods of Operation in the United States. By Prof. R. C. Bryant. Pp. xviii + 590. (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.; London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1913.) Price 15s. net.

THIS text-book on forest utilisation, well printed and fully illustrated, is a very useful addition to the scanty literature on the subject in the English language. The author, who is a professor in the